

<b>Interview Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 09/941,500	<b>Applicant(s)</b> NELSON, THOMAS JOHN	
	<b>Examiner</b> Lanna Mai	<b>Art Unit</b> 3637	

All participants (applicant, applicant's representative, PTO personnel):

(1) Lanna Mai. (3)\_\_\_\_\_.

(2) Mr Howard Flaxman. (4)\_\_\_\_\_.

Date of Interview: 10 June 2004.

Type: a) ☐ Telephonic b) ☐ Video Conference  
c) ☒ Personal [copy given to: 1) ☐ applicant 2) ☒ applicant's representative]

Exhibit shown or demonstration conducted: d) ☐ Yes e) ☒ No.  
If Yes, brief description: \_\_\_\_\_.

Claim(s) discussed: proposed claims 55-58, 63, 68, 70-78.

Identification of prior art discussed: Swedish patent 8202 375-5.

Agreement with respect to the claims f) ☐ was reached. g) ☒ was not reached. h) ☐ N/A.

Substance of Interview including description of the general nature of what was agreed to if an agreement was reached, or any other comments: The proposed amendment was discussed. Applicant will add language to limit the invention to the environment of flooring panels.

(A fuller description, if necessary, and a copy of the amendments which the examiner agreed would render the claims allowable, if available, must be attached. Also, where no copy of the amendments that would render the claims allowable is available, a summary thereof must be attached.)

THE FORMAL WRITTEN REPLY TO THE LAST OFFICE ACTION MUST INCLUDE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW. (See MPEP Section 713.04). If a reply to the last Office action has already been filed, APPLICANT IS GIVEN ONE MONTH FROM THIS INTERVIEW DATE, OR THE MAILING DATE OF THIS INTERVIEW SUMMARY FORM, WHICHEVER IS LATER, TO FILE A STATEMENT OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW. See Summary of Record of Interview requirements on reverse side or on attached sheet.

Examiner Note: You must sign this form unless it is an Attachment to a signed Office action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Examiner's signature, if required

## Summary of Record of Interview Requirements

### Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP), Section 713.04, Substance of Interview Must be Made of Record

A complete written statement as to the substance of any face-to-face, video conference, or telephone interview with regard to an application must be made of record in the application whether or not an agreement with the examiner was reached at the interview.

### Title 37 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 1.133 Interviews

#### Paragraph (b)

In every instance where reconsideration is requested in view of an interview with an examiner, a complete written statement of the reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action must be filed by the applicant. An interview does not remove the necessity for reply to Office action as specified in §§ 1.111, 1.135. (35 U.S.C. 132)

#### 37 CFR §1.2 Business to be transacted in writing.

All business with the Patent or Trademark Office should be transacted in writing. The personal attendance of applicants or their attorneys or agents at the Patent and Trademark Office is unnecessary. The action of the Patent and Trademark Office will be based exclusively on the written record in the Office. No attention will be paid to any alleged oral promise, stipulation, or understanding in relation to which there is disagreement or doubt.

The action of the Patent and Trademark Office cannot be based exclusively on the written record in the Office if that record is itself incomplete through the failure to record the substance of interviews.

It is the responsibility of the applicant or the attorney or agent to make the substance of an interview of record in the application file, unless the examiner indicates he or she will do so. It is the examiner's responsibility to see that such a record is made and to correct material inaccuracies which bear directly on the question of patentability.

Examiners must complete an Interview Summary Form for each interview held where a matter of substance has been discussed during the interview by checking the appropriate boxes and filling in the blanks. Discussions regarding only procedural matters, directed solely to restriction requirements for which interview recordation is otherwise provided for in Section 812.01 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, or pointing out typographical errors or unreadable script in Office actions or the like, are excluded from the interview recordation procedures below. Where the substance of an interview is completely recorded in an Examiners Amendment, no separate Interview Summary Record is required.

The Interview Summary Form shall be given an appropriate Paper No., placed in the right hand portion of the file, and listed on the "Contents" section of the file wrapper. In a personal interview, a duplicate of the Form is given to the applicant (or attorney or agent) at the conclusion of the interview. In the case of a telephone or video-conference interview, the copy is mailed to the applicant's correspondence address either with or prior to the next official communication. If additional correspondence from the examiner is not likely before an allowance or if other circumstances dictate, the Form should be mailed promptly after the interview rather than with the next official communication.

The Form provides for recordation of the following information:

- Application Number (Series Code and Serial Number)
- Name of applicant
- Name of examiner
- Date of interview
- Type of interview (telephonic, video-conference, or personal)
- Name of participant(s) (applicant, attorney or agent, examiner, other PTO personnel, etc.)
- An indication whether or not an exhibit was shown or a demonstration conducted
- An identification of the specific prior art discussed
- An indication whether an agreement was reached and if so, a description of the general nature of the agreement (may be by attachment of a copy of amendments or claims agreed as being allowable). Note: Agreement as to allowability is tentative and does not restrict further action by the examiner to the contrary.
- The signature of the examiner who conducted the interview (if Form is not an attachment to a signed Office action)

It is desirable that the examiner orally remind the applicant of his or her obligation to record the substance of the interview of each case. It should be noted, however, that the Interview Summary Form will not normally be considered a complete and proper recordation of the interview unless it includes, or is supplemented by the applicant or the examiner to include, all of the applicable items required below concerning the substance of the interview.

A complete and proper recordation of the substance of any interview should include at least the following applicable items:

- 1) A brief description of the nature of any exhibit shown or any demonstration conducted,
- 2) an identification of the claims discussed,
- 3) an identification of the specific prior art discussed,
- 4) an identification of the principal proposed amendments of a substantive nature discussed, unless these are already described on the Interview Summary Form completed by the Examiner,
- 5) a brief identification of the general thrust of the principal arguments presented to the examiner,  
(The identification of arguments need not be lengthy or elaborate. A verbatim or highly detailed description of the arguments is not required. The identification of the arguments is sufficient if the general nature or thrust of the principal arguments made to the examiner can be understood in the context of the application file. Of course, the applicant may desire to emphasize and fully describe those arguments which he or she feels were or might be persuasive to the examiner.)
- 6) a general indication of any other pertinent matters discussed, and
- 7) if appropriate, the general results or outcome of the interview unless already described in the Interview Summary Form completed by the examiner.

Examiners are expected to carefully review the applicant's record of the substance of an interview. If the record is not complete and accurate, the examiner will give the applicant an extendable one month time period to correct the record.

### Examiner to Check for Accuracy

If the claims are allowable for other reasons of record, the examiner should send a letter setting forth the examiner's version of the statement attributed to him or her. If the record is complete and accurate, the examiner should place the indication, "Interview Record OK" on the paper recording the substance of the interview along with the date and the examiner's initials.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS IN 09/941,500**

1-54 (canceled)

55. (currently amended) A disengageable connector for vertically and horizontally interconnecting two individual flooring panels with identical edges to form a permanent or temporary laminate flooring surface on top of a support structure, the connector comprising;

a base having a given width and lying within a base plane, the base having a projection extending vertically from the base to a first height, the projection having top and bottom portions and consisting of identical right and left halves for insertion into the edges of two panels to be connected, the top portion of each half comprising identical extensions extending horizontally in opposite directions equal distances wherein the combined width of the extensions is less than the width of the base, the extensions include at least one angled portion obliquely sloped in relation to a longitudinal axis of the base, and two protrusions extending vertically from the base to a second height which is substantially smaller than the first height, the protrusions spaced apart from the projection and being located on either side of the projection beyond a lateral extent of the extensions, wherein each of the protrusions includes first and second tapered surfaces extending outwardly from a top portion of the protrusion, the first tapered surface facing away from the projection and extending at an oblique angle relative to the base plane and the second tapered surface facing the projection and extending at an oblique angle relative to the base plane.

56. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 55, wherein the connector is an elongated track.

57. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 55, wherein the projection extends substantially the entire length of the connector.

58. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 55, wherein the protrusions extend substantially the entire length of the connector.

59-62. (cancelled)

63. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 55, wherein the base further includes at least one recess formed between the projection and the two protrusions.

64. (canceled) The connector according to claim 63, wherein each of the protrusions further includes a tapered surface.

65. (canceled) The connector according to claim 64, wherein each of the protrusions includes tapered surfaces extending outwardly from a top portion of the protrusion.

66. (canceled) The connector according to claim 55, wherein each of the protrusions further includes a tapered surface.

67. (canceled) The connector according to claim 66, wherein each of the protrusions includes tapered surfaces extending outwardly from a top portion of the protrusion.

68. (currently amended) A disengageable connector for interconnecting two individual panels to form a surface on top of a support structure, comprising;

a base lying within a base plane and having a projection extending vertically from the base to a first height;

the projection having top and bottom portions and including identical right and left halves for insertion into edges of two panels to be connected, the top portion of each of the right and left halves comprising identical extensions extending horizontally in opposite directions; and

two protrusions extending vertically from the base to a second height which is substantially smaller than the first height, the protrusions spaced apart from the projection and being located on opposite sides of the projection, and ~~each of the protrusions further includes a tapered surface,~~  
wherein each of the protrusions includes first and second tapered surfaces extending outwardly from a top portion of the protrusion, the first tapered surface facing away from the projection and extending at an oblique angle relative to the base plane and the second tapered surface facing the projection and extending at an oblique angle relative to the base plane.

69. (canceled) The connector according to claim 68, wherein each of the protrusions includes tapered surfaces extending outwardly from a top portion of the protrusion.

70. (currently amended) A disengageable connector for interconnecting two individual panels to form a surface on top of a support structure, comprising;

a base lying within a base plane having a projection extending vertically from the base to a first height;

the projection having top and bottom portions and including identical right and left halves for insertion into edges of two panels to be connected, the top portion of each of the right and left halves comprising identical extensions extending horizontally in opposite directions; and

first and second protrusions extending vertically from the base to a second height which is substantially smaller than the first height, the first and second protrusions spaced apart from the projection and being located on opposite sides of the projection, wherein the base further includes a substantially flat surface extending between the projection and the first and second protrusion, the flat surface being interrupted by ~~includes~~ at least one recess formed between the projection and at least one of the first and second protrusions.

71. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 70, wherein the base includes first and second recesses respectively formed between the projection and the first and second protrusions.

72. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 70, wherein each of the protrusions further includes a tapered surface.

73. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 72, wherein each of the protrusions includes tapered surfaces extending outwardly from a top portion of the protrusion.

74. (currently amended) A disengageable connector for interconnecting two individual panels to form a surface on top of a support structure, comprising;

a base having a given width and lying within a base plane, the base having a projection

extending vertically from the base to a first height;

the projection having top and bottom portions and including identical right and left halves for insertion into edges of two panels to be connected, the top portion of each of the right and left halves comprising identical extensions extending horizontally in opposite directions equal distances wherein the combined width of the extensions is less than the width of the base, the extensions include at least one angled portion obliquely sloped in relation to a longitudinal axis of the base; and

two protrusions extending vertically from the base to a second height which is substantially smaller than the first height, the protrusions spaced apart from the projection and being located on opposite sides of the projection beyond a lateral extent of the extensions, wherein each of the protrusions includes first and second tapered surfaces extending outwardly from a top portion of the protrusion, the first tapered surface facing away from the projection and extending at an oblique angle relative to the base plane and the second tapered surface facing the projection and extending at an oblique angle relative to the base plane.

75. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 74, wherein the connector is an elongated track.

76. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 74, wherein the projection extends substantially the entire length of the connector.

77. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 74, wherein the protrusions extend substantially the entire length of the connector.

78. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 74, wherein the base further includes at least one recess formed between the projection and the two protrusions.

79. (canceled) The connector according to claim 78, wherein each of the protrusions further includes a tapered surface.

80. (canceled) The connector according to claim 79, wherein each of the protrusions includes tapered surfaces extending outwardly from a top portion of the protrusion.

81. (canceled) The connector according to claim 74, wherein each of the protrusions further includes a tapered surface which decreases in height as it extends away from a center of the base



82. (canceled) The connector according to claim 81, wherein each of the protrusions includes tapered surfaces extending outwardly from a top portion of the protrusion.